DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 375 604 EC 303 444

AUTHOR	Silverman, Linda Kreger, Ed.
TITLE	Attention Deficit Disorders.
PUB DATE	94
NOTE	20p.; In: Silverman, Linda Kreger, Ed.; Knopper, Dorothy, Ed. Understanding Our Gifted. Volume 6, Issues 1-6, September 1993-August 1994; see EC 303 439.
AVAILABLE FROM	Open Space Communications, Inc., 1900 Flosom, Suite 108, Boulder, CO 80302 (annual subscription for six issues: individual, $30; institutions, $35; international individual, $40; international institutions, $45).
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT	Understanding Our Gifted; v6 n5 May-Jun 1994
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Attention Deficit Disorders; Elementary Secondary Education; *Gifted; *Gifted Disabled; *Intervention; *Student Characteristics; Symptoms (Individual Disorders)
IDENTIFIERS	Perfectionism

ABSTRACT

This journal theme issue focuses on attention deficit disorders (ADD) in gifted children. "Gifted Children with Attention Deficit Disorder" by Deirdre V. Lovecky outlines symptoms of ADD, types of ADD, issues of giftedness, strengths of gifted children with ADD, and methods for helping gifted children with ADD. "The Perplexed Perfectionist" by George W. Dorry accepts the positive and negative sides of perfectionism, notes the high personal and interpersonal expectations of gifted children with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, and describes treatment of these children by encouraging them to accept approximations of the perfect solution to a problem and by building steps of new learning that help the child to step away from dependence gradually. A special feature titled "ADHD or Gifted?" presents a dialogue with Sharon Lind and Linda Silverman which reviews 13 questions parents and teachers should ask to determine the child's need for special services. Regular columns discuss revisiting childhood, the dangers of ignoring the gifted, literature resources, creative ventures, and turnabout children. (JDD)

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UNDERSTANDING OUR GIFTED®

Dedicated to helping gifted children reach their full potential

May-June, 1994

Volume 6, Issue 5

Gifted Children with Attention Deficit Disorder

Deirdre V. Lovecky, Ph.D.

Sean is a charming boy, passionate about life and everything he does. He loves to make things, and is skilled at origami at age six. What Sean doesn't do is schoolwork. He complains it is boring, and he hates it. Actually most of the work *is* too easy for Sean. Nevertheless, he seems unwilling or unable to complete even tasks he initially likes and finds challenging. These he claims are "too hard," and he gives up easily if he can't find an immediate answer. Sean tends to interrupt the class, butts into discussions and games of other children, and has difficulty sitting still or waiting his turn. Parenting Sean is difficult as he demands so much attention. His parents worry the rest of the family will take second place while Sean grows up spoiled, thinking he should always come first.

Gifted children with attention deficit disorder (ADD) travel a tough road through childhood. Their behavioral symptoms can inhibit academic success, and have emotional and social consequences. Being gifted and also having an attention deficit can seem like a contradiction. How can gifted children who can concentrate for so long on something they choose have a problem paying attention?

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FOCUS ON:

ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDERS

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The Perplexed Perfectionist

George W. Dorry, Ph.D.

After the celebration of an achievement, there is a sigh of relief from the perfectionist that, once more, the dream was enacted into reality. That happened yesterday when a child accomplished building the block structure which he had in mind, and it happened years ago when the Mayor of New York City cut the ribbon on the world's longest suspension bridge, the Verranzano Narrows Bridge. The positive side of perfectionism is the ability to conceive something of a higher order and create it (Silverman, 1993). To paraphrase T. S. Eliot (1958), the negative side of perfectionism is the gap between the idea and the reality, between the conception and the creation. It falls on two groups of individuals as often as the sun shines: gifted children in general and gifted children with attention deficits.

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) is a neurochemically based deficiency in the areas of the brain that control selective attention and the "executive function" areas that direct planning, logistics, and a holistic overview of situations. The underlying condition of the attention deficit

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EC 303 414

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FROM THE EDITOR

Cool Breezes to you from the Rocky Mountains!

We have a hot topic for this summer issue: Attention Deficit Disorders. Few questions have proven to be as perplexing to parents and educators as the relationship between giftedness and ADD/ADHD. Often considered the catch-all diagnosis of the '90s, the tremendous number of gifted children labeled ADD is unnerving. Dee Lovecky has found a higher incidence of ADD among exceptionally gifted children than among more moderately gifted children. What does this mean? We really don't know. As a clinician with 30 years of experience with giftedness, I can honestly say that the more cases I see that look like ADD, the less I understand about the connection between the two.

Until 1994, "ADD" was used to designate attention deficit disorder with and without hyperactivity, although most cases are actually ADHD: attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. In the new *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV)* just released from the American Psychiatric Association, "AD/HD" has become the new appellation. In different articles in this issue, you will find the syndrome variously referred to as "ADD," "ADHD," "AD/HD," and "ADD/ADHD," with just as many viewpoints on this complex issue.

Our two lead articles are written by psychologists who are knowledgeable about attentional disorders and giftedness—a rare combination, unfortunately. Dr. Deirdre Lovecky's article is based on the study of 70 gifted and highly gifted children with ADD. Well known for her theoretical and clinical perspectives on giftedness, Dee specializes in gifted children with ADD. Dr.George Dorry is a noted specialist in the area of attention deficit disorders who has seen a substantial number of gifted children in his practice. Our special feature is a dialogue between Sharon Lind and myself on "ADHD or Gifted?" in an attempt to reconcile the clinical and educational viewpoints. Annemarie Roeper enters the discussion with her own gentle philosophy of respect for the unfolding of the individual self. This issue will give you much to think about.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate three friends and associates of *Understanding Our Gifted*. Martha Morelock, a regular contributor to *UOG*, just won the $2,000 1994 Hollingworth Award from Intertel Foundation for her project, "The Profoundly Gifted Child in Family Context: Eight Case Studies." Kathi Kearney, our highly gifted columnist, along with co-author, Jene LeBlanc, just won special mention from the Mensa Education & Research Foundation for their excellent paper, "Forgotten Pioneers in the Study of Gifted African-Americans." And Dr. Julian Stanley, founder of the Talent Search, has been elected a winner of the James McKeen Cattell Fellow Award in Applied Psychology for 1994. In one of his cherished letters, congratulating us on "producing a superb issue" of *UOG* on Talent Searches, Dr. Stanley was gracious enough to share this great honor with all of us who "have labored hard on behalf of the academically gifted." Thank you, Dr. Stanley, for all the supportive letters you have sent to those of us who write in this field. It helps to know that someone we respect cared that much.

Linda Silverman

UNDERSTANDING OUR GIFTED®

Published by

Open Space Communications, Inc.

Publisher
Dorothy Knopper

Editor
Dr. Linda Kreger Silverman

Editorial Assistant
Barbara Gilman

Column Editors
Mary Lynn Baum, *Parent, Vancouver, British Columbia*

Dorothy Knopper, *Private Consultant for the Gifted, Boulder, Colorado*

Dr. Deirdre Lovecky, *Clinical Psychologist, Providence, Rhode Island*

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Understanding Our Gifted **(ISSN 1040-1350) is published bimonthly by Open Space Communications, Inc., P.O. Box 18268, Boulder, CO 80308-8268. Subscriptions are $35 for 1 year (6 issues). Canadian/foreign subscriptions are $45.00 U.S. funds. Institutions add $5 to rates shown. Back issues are $8.00; Canadian/foreign $10.00. Third class postage paid at Boulder, CO. Subscription inquiries should be sent to the publishing office. For subscription address changes, send mailing label along with new address to *Understanding Our Gifted*, 1900 Folsom, Suite 108, Boulder, CO, 80302, eight weeks before moving.**

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Annemarie Roeper

PARENTING

Revisiting Childhood

Birth: the birth of a child is a mystery and a miracle which is repeated daily all over the globe. In fact, birth is many mysteries: the fact of creation and life itself; the ways in which all newborns are similar; and most of all, the infinite variety of body, mind and soul so evident in each new miracle of birth.

This endless variety repeats itself also in nature, wherever we look. Just watch the unfolding of the flowers as they grow in rich earth. Each exhibits a unique beauty which is increased manifold by the beauty of their combined uniqueness. All human beings hold inside them the mysteries of personal growth. Pondering this wealth of nature is awe inspiring.

As each child gathers experience, her individual personality grows as she follows her life path. On the way, the growing child's body, mind and soul are nurtured in different ways by the adults around her. The manner in which children grow and bloom and the directions which they take are as much a miracle as the birth itself. No matter what type of nourishment they are offered, be it physical, intellectual or emotional, it will not change the fundamental basis of their personalities any more than it would change the color of their eyes. By the same token, exposure to any kind of learning, such as play experience or teaching, will not change the unique way of thinking and feeling and growing embedded in each self. However, the process and content of education can either support or hinder the growth of the soul of the individual.

For this reason, the person who grows up in an environment dedicated to personal growth has the greatest chance to actualize the full bloom of his or her individuality and can most easily share this wealth with others. Unhindered personal development is the birthright of each living being on earth. It is an unspoken promise made by those who become parents. Moreover, growth of mind, body and soul is an involuntary activity beyond our control. It is active, not passive, and when something interferes with this movement it creates pain, suffering, irritation, anger, hostility or stunted growth. This is particularly true for the gifted who are often driven by their own inner agenda.

The task for parents and teachers is to support this growth and delight in it and gently create an environment which allows this development to happen. There are certain skills which are necessary for all to acquire in order to find their place in society. However, how and when this learning takes place again differs with each child's process of growth. The conclusion these insights *must* lead us to is that real education can only, and therefore must, start with the child and her uniqueness. There are educational communities where this happens. However, the world of education has become more and more governed by a totally different point of view: a view which seems to forget realities of the world of childhood and the need for carefree growth; a view which begins with the curriculum and imposes it on the child. It decides what a child should learn and how she should learn it, no matter who this child is, how she grows, or what she needs. Instead, educators have decided that all children should learn the same thing at the same time and in the same manner. We set standards and goals for them to reach. We decide that learning is the passive intake of information acquired sitting quietly at a desk, to be given back to us as accurately as possible. All this is decided in advance despite our knowledge that children need to

(Continued on page 4)

be actively involved in their learning; they must want to learn; they do not learn the same thing at the same time; they do not give it back to us as they were taught it; they digest it and turn it into something else which becomes their own.

We believe that skill learning is the basis of all learning when in truth it only makes sense as part of an overall growth process. We are surrounding the child with a host of demands that interfere with the flow of learning. Children are anxiously trying to be good and obedient and to live up to the expectations of the adults who guide them. Their self image becomes based solely on their acceptance by the important adults in their lives, which forces them to repress that which drives from the inside.

Maria Montessori says: *If during the delicate period of growth, disrespectful demands are inflicted upon the child his spirit will be diminished and it may never be possible for him to accomplish great deeds as an adult. For such a child must perform the cruel task of hiding his real self, fragmenting it and burying in his subconscious his wealth of aspiration that will forever be unrealized.* (Wolf, 1989, p.33)

If this is true for all children, it is even more true for the gifted, for their inner urge to fulfill themselves pushes like a storm against a wall of expectation that may be foreign to their nature and needs. Their "great deeds" will never be accomplished. Instead, they cannot help but disappoint their teachers, parents, and themselves. The inner struggle becomes so great that they develop behavior problems, disrupt classrooms; teachers become more concerned, look at the children with a concerned expression, call conferences with parents; the child is then exposed to many tests and she may now be defined with two labels: gifted and ADD.

In many cases the attention deficit will disappear with a different situation, teacher or a change of schools. A child who could have been delighted with herself, whose parents could have enjoyed her daily is now unhappy and struggling with parents and teachers. She forgets her dreams.

The paradox is that our society, which takes pride in its plurality, bases its approach to education on conformity. Just as I am finishing this article, a mother calls to set up an appointment for a consultation. "I have a gifted nine year old," she says. I sadly finish her sentence, "And he has been identified as having attention deficit disorder."

Parents now, more than in the past, must be their child's advocate and find out if their gifted child's learning environment truly allows him to grow and spread his inner wings.

REFERENCE

Wolf, D. (1989). *Peaceful children, peaceful world: The challenge of Maria Montessori.* Altoona, PA: Parent Child Press.

Dr. Annemarie Roeper is a consultant on the gifted in Oakland, California, and author of the book, ***Educating Children for Life.*** Co-founder of the Roeper City and Country School and the ***Roeper Review***, Annemarie has inspired a worldwide focus on global awareness in gifted education.

A Child

A child:
A young human being:
delicate and strong
aware and oblivious
A young human being
Ready to meet the world
To cope with it
to love it
and to master it
To make order out of chaos.

A world:
beautiful and ugly
tender and cruel
ordered and chaotic.

A world:
ready to meet the child
yet able to forget it
to nurture it and grow it
to use it and destroy it
to know it and to love it.

The young human being and the world are strangers to each other and yet they are one. Education is the dramatic encounter between the two. Will it lead to destruction or to creative health?

Annemarie Roeper, 1973

INSTRUCTIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Ignoring the Gifted Can Be Hazardous to Our Health

The Fall 1993 release of the Department of Education national report on gifted and talented children detailed the same national neglect previously reported by various commissions and individuals. I personally reflect that in the last 20 years advocates for the gifted seem to have made no progress toward appropriate education for these students and, indeed, in most states, budget cuts have resulted in visible losses. In spite of the growth of the National Association for Gifted Children and some federal funding, the general outlook for gifted children in public schools continues to be very grim.

However, an article by Ellen Goodman (1993) provides food for thought. In her article, Ms. Goodman points out that human behavior has changed significantly within memory. One of the examples she cites is the changed public view of drinking and driving. Within about five years, the designated driver concept became socially and politically correct. A sustained media campaign created a new social role and a societal preference.

What if we were to apply this idea to gifted children? What if "nerds," "eggheads," "brains," and "schoolboys/girls" became objects of respect? What if billboards and the media carried public service announcements such as, "Not educating gifted children properly is hazardous to our (society's) health"? What if parents didn't "hide" or apologize for their child's intellectual gifts? What if education for the gifted were allotted the same concern and funds as education for the mentally handicapped or linguistically different? The answer is probably far better than we dream.

You may be thinking that giftedness could never be accepted and valued by the general public. However, remember the changes in public beliefs that have resulted in fewer eggs being eaten, more seat belts being worn, the decline of smoking, and, of course, the designated driver (Goodman, 1993). Before a public campaign on the gifted could begin, parents, educators, and advocates of the gifted need to change some of their behavior. Perhaps we need to make personal affirmations before we can go public. Repeating statements such as, *"Giftedness is an asset," "Giftedness is neither earned nor created; it is, and it creates real and varied needs,"* or even simply, *"Giftedness is good,"* might prepare us mentally to convince the world.

When each of us personally has convinced ourselves that giftedness is O.K., our behavior will change. Parents will not feel compelled to apologize for asking for appropriate education for their gifted children, teachers will not feel uncomfortable that they "get" to teach the smart kids, and advocates who have given up what seems a hopeless task will find new avenues of advocacy.

Convincing the world at large that neglecting the gifted is destructive and dangerous is a formidable task. However, if we became proactive toward our goal of raising a nation's consciousness and changing its behavior, we might prevail. We know it can be done; if smokers can be convinced that they must give up their addiction to tobacco, certainly people can be taught the benefits of educating gifted children, and the injustice and danger of not doing so. Ignoring the educational needs of gifted children is hazardous to society's health. *We* know this; now we must act on our knowledge.

REFERENCE

Goodman, E. (1993, December 21). Successful public health campaigns suggest we can fight violence. *The Arizona Daily Star*. p. 8, Section A.

Shirley W. Schiever, Ph.D., is a curriculum specialist at the Fine Arts Magnet School in Tucson, Arizona, and the author of ***A Comprehensive Approach to Teaching Thinking***.

THE READING ROOM

Welcome to our second discussion of an author whose work may be especially appealing to the brightest young readers. Orson Scott Card is primarily a writer of science fiction: however, readers who do not consider themselves sci-fi buffs will find much of interest in his complex, passionately moral and extremely intelligent novels and stories. Card does not aim for a readership of children and young adults, but young characters are vitally important in most of his works. A child able to cope with the reading level should be able to cope with the content.

Newcomers to his work would do well to begin with the three books about Ender—A.K.A. Andrew Wiggin. The first, *Ender's Game*, tells the story of Andrew's youth, during which he becomes a hero to all humanity, winning the "Bugger Wars" against an alien species of insect-like creatures by learning enough about their biology to wipe them out—an act of "xenocide," the purposeful destruction of another sentient species. Though all humanity rejoices at what is perceived to be deliverance from demonic aliens, Andrew himself has learned that the Buggers he has destroyed were not in any sense evil; his guilt is overwhelming.

The second book, *Speaker for the Dead*, takes place three thousand years later. Relativity accounts for Andrew's remaining alive for this period of time. Time passes more slowly for a near light-speed space traveler than for the planet-bound, and Andrew (now Ender) has been traveling. To expiate his guilt he has taken upon himself the task of explaining the beauty of Bugger culture, becoming a "Speaker for the Dead." Unknown to the rest of humanity, he has managed to save the hive queen of the Bugger species (who has cocooned herself and her fertilized eggs) and has been searching the earth-colonized "Hundred Worlds" for a planet suitable to the re-establishment of the Bugger species.

The setting of this second book is Lusitania, a planet colonized by Brazilian Catholics, that is home to a species known as the Pequininos (called "Piggies"), but also to a devastating virus (the descolada) that kills all plant or animal species not native to the planet. The central characters are Piggies and the colony's scientists, successors to those who devised the anti-viral agents to keep the descolada from destroying the colony. The central question is whether Piggies and humans (and eventually Buggers, once Ender brings the Hive Queen here) can share a single planet in spite of the vast differences in their biologies and their cultures.

Though all three books are strongly philosophical, it is the third, *Xenocide*, in which the threads of all the moral and scientific issues at the heart of the series are brought together. The Starways Congress that rules Earth and the Hundred Planets has sent battleships toward Lusitania to destroy it so as to keep the deadly descolada virus from spreading throughout the universe and killing all other living species. Can three species (and perhaps an extremely unusual fourth) save themselves from that external threat and from the threat each poses to the others? Only brilliant science and inter-species cooperation can save them.

Card has created a sprawling parable that confronts an amazing variety of fundamental questions. A small sampling: Can science and religion coexist? Is genocide the inevitable result of a clash of unequal cultures? Can morality be judged by an individual's intention or only by the results of his or her behavior? Does the concept of free will have a meaning in a world of genetic programming? In no case is a simple answer provided. Reading Ender's story is like participating in a good, long adventure while at the same time exploring many of the most challenging and fascinating intellectual, moral and philosophical issues that have occupied humanity's finest minds.

Stephanie Tolan, from Columbus, Ohio, is a noted author of children's books and one of the authors of the award-winning book, ***Guiding the Gifted Child***.

How can it be that the very tasks that most gifted children find so easy are the ones that give those with ADD the most trouble? Part of the problem is their advanced skills. A child who can think out complex problems and is primarily a holistic learner resists the more usual step-by-step sequential style taught by schools. However, most gifted children can perform sequential and repetitious tasks even though they prefer not to do them, and may resist if asked to do them over and over. Those with ADD have trouble performing these tasks any time, resist doing them even when they would be beneficial and cannot vary the style used for learning. Thus, gifted children without ADD may not like doing 30 examples of newly learned math problems for homework, but they can do them. Those with ADD cannot. Unfortunately, when gifted children are placed in programs where the work is far too easy for them, differentiating "won't" from "can't" is very difficult.

Whether a particular gifted child has attention deficit disorder is not easily determined. Diagnosis should be based on an extensive evaluation of the child by a psychologist or developmental pediatrician familiar with both giftedness and attention deficit disorder. Diagnosis is best accomplished by use of test materials that detect variations in attention and concentration over time, behavior checklists standardized on children with ADD, and a complete history given by parents. For this paper data were obtained from more than 70 gifted children with ADD evaluated in this manner.

Symptoms of Attention Deficit Disorder

The symptoms exhibited can be divided into five categories: *poor concentration and attention, low frustration tolerance, distractibility, impulsivity,* and *hyperactivity.*

Problems with attention and concentration occur when a child has difficulty focusing and sustaining attention on a variety of tasks of moderate interest, or in shifting attention among tasks. Often people think that ADD means the child cannot focus attention at all, but this is not true. For example, Barkley (1991) and Weiss and Hechtman (1993), who have worked with hundreds of average children with ADD, state that attentional difficulties

The key to understanding the attentional problems is that the tasks are not stimulating.

are most evident in situations requiring sustained attention to dull, boring, repetitive tasks such as schoolwork, homework, or chores. Children described by teachers as having attention spans of 3 to 6 minutes were found to be able to sit and concentrate on television or other preferred activity for hours. Difficulty with concentration is more apparent on tasks that include elements of boredom, fatigue, repetition, and low levels of reward and motivation. The key to understanding the attentional problems is that the tasks are not stimulating. When the children are stimulated, especially by a task they select, they are quite able to pay attention. With gifted children the same holds true. The difference appears to be that gifted children with ADD have more preferred activities to start with, and somewhat longer attention spans than average children with ADD; thus, they look attentive for more activities despite attentional deficits for schoolwork.

Shifting attention over tasks is a problem for many with ADD. On one hand, they shift rapidly from task to task or skip within a task from one part to another quickly. On the other hand, they have trouble shifting once they are immersed in a preferred activity. In fact, many have trouble with changes and shifts in any routine. Trying to get such a youngster to stop what she is doing to eat, take a bath, go to school or to bed is very difficult.

Low frustration tolerance is a second feature of ADD. The child finds it difficult to persist on tasks, gives up at the first sign of uncertainty, finds many tasks boring and cannot engage in a task enough to overcome boredom. Only when tasks are novel does frustration and boredom ease. Because of this easy boredom with tasks, task persistence is low and the child does not complete the work. Fatigue and sensory overload increase the problem so the ability to sustain attention is decreased by too much of the same type of work. Thus, giving an ADD child a whole page of practice examples and expecting good performance is likely to result in incomplete work and a bored and frustrated child. Giving the child fewer examples, immediately checking them and reinforcing good effort is more likely to result in work completion and good effort.

Distractibility is the third feature of ADD. Recent research (summarized in Weiss & Hechtman, 1993) suggests that children with ADD may be no more distractible than other children on certain types of distractors, but more so on others. For example, a high appeal distractor such as a fire truck going by the classroom would be distracting to all children but the rustling of papers, how a sunbeam hits the wall, or someone coughing would not ordinarily distract most children, but would children with ADD. Since gifted children tend to be more sensitive to the environment to begin with, the number of potentially distracting environmental phenomena is truly staggering for the gifted child with ADD.

Impulsive behavior includes acting without thinking; needing a lot of supervision; frequently calling out in class; interrupting others; intruding on others' games; engaging in frequent, unnecessary risk-taking; having difficulty waiting turns in a game or in a group situation; and responding without waiting for directions to be completed. Impulsive responding is the result of behavioral *disinhibition* in which children have difficulty monitoring and cuing themselves to watch and wait. They act first and think second. Impulsive gifted children tend to guess at answers without actually working out problems. They jump to conclusions about what the directions for a task will be and rush to do it. The problem is in the result. Some gifted children without ADD also jump to conclusions about questions being asked because they truly already know the answer. Those with ADD tend to guess incorrectly, and to insist they are right without rechecking their work. They also find it extremely difficult to allow a slower pace than they are going so they interrupt. Their constant calling out and disruption is a problem even for teachers of gifted classes.

Hyperactivity is the final symptom of children with attention deficit disorder. Not all children show increased motoric activity. For some, excessive activity shows itself in talking too much without getting to the point. For others there are no outward manifestations of hyperactivity but inwardly the children subjectively feel as if their minds are racing, and they can never relax or shut off thinking. This last group may also have symptoms of anxiety due to this mental arousal that never stops, including during sleep.

Other Symptoms. In addition to the primary symptoms there are secondary symptoms exhibited by most children with ADD. These include difficulties with planning and organization, sequencing of items, keeping track of time, and dealing adequately with overload and fatigue. Problems with motivation and peer relationships may also exist.

Types of Attention Deficit Disorder

There are two main types of attention deficit disorder: with hyperactivity, and without hyperactivity. Those with hyperactivity often are diagnosed in the early years while those without hyperactivity are often missed, especially if they are girls. Many more boys than girls appear to have ADD by a ratio of about 3:1 (Barkley, 1991); however, girls may be overlooked since they tend to try to conform and please teachers and parents more than do boys. There is increasingly strong evidence that there is a genetic basis for ADD. In adults whose children have ADD, but who have not been diagnosed themselves, many report symptoms similar to the child's in their own childhood.

Attention deficit disorders differ in severity. At one extreme are severely affected children who are very hyperactive, impulsive and quick-tempered. They have trouble attending for long to much of anything, and may also evidence motivational problems. They are often diagnosed in preschool years because their behavior is so problematic. At the other extreme are those who are not diagnosed until the work load of school becomes too great for their powers of concentration and attention. Often this happens with mildly affected gifted children in middle school though it may not occur until high school or even college (Freeman, 1988).

Issues of Giftedness

Being gifted presents another set of issues. When a child is both gifted and has ADD, it can be difficult to determine which behaviors are due to ADD and which to giftedness. These issues include asynchrony, increased intensity, sensitivity, emotional reactivity, intellectual and imaginational excitation. All of these are commonly found in gifted children, though for those with ADD the behavioral correlates of these traits may be more problematic.

Asynchrony is a particularly difficult issue for the gifted (Columbus Group, 1991). Asynchrony refers to discrepancies among chronological, intellectual, physical, social and emotional development. For average children, the discrepancies are small. For average children with ADD, the discrepancy between chronological age and social and emotional age is larger. For gifted children, all areas of development are usually above chronological age and discrepant from each other. For the gifted child with ADD, the discrepancy between intellectual age and social and emotional ages is very wide and the child may be below chronological age in these areas. Thus, gifted children, with ADD may perform academically at a high level but find that gifted peers do not tolerate immature social skills or immature emotional reactions to frustration. These children may find they are out of sync with everyone. [See Lovecky, 1993, *UOG, 5* (5A), 3].

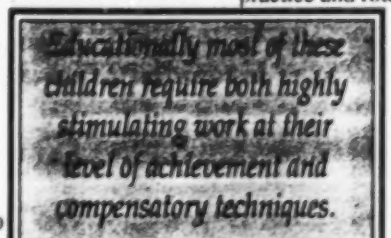
Emotional reactivity, sensitivity to the environment, as well as increased intellectual and imaginational excitation (Piechowski, 1986) present more of a challenge for gifted children with ADD than other gifted children because those with ADD find it so difficult to self-monitor, self-cue, and self-regulate. The disinhibition seen in ADD affects all areas of giftedness so

that characteristics associated with being gifted may be even more difficult to manage for the ADD gifted child than for other gifted children.

Strengths of Gifted Children with ADD

There is a lack of focus in the literature on some of the accompanying strengths of ADD. In my sample of gifted children with ADD, the children, when motivated, were found to *work quickly and produce work of significant quality*. They had many novel ideas and were very creative in thinking and writing. Because they tend to notice things no one else would, they may devise new ways of looking at things.

Spontaneity was a trait that was very valued and useful, allowing gifted children with ADD to move on past mistakes or failures. Children reported feeling joyful and spreading that joy to others. Many of the children invited others to join in preferred activities, particularly sports, art, music and drama. Because the children were spontaneous, they seemed not to worry very much about how they looked to others. This enabled a number of them to perform in theaters or orchestras. Of the children seen in this study, an amazing number were *performers* of one type or another.


Educationally most of these children require both highly stimulating work at their level of achievement and compensatory techniques.

Another strength for many appeared to be a *sweet temperament and trust of people*. Even while lacking social skills and being socially rejected, these children retained their positive view of others and of humanity in general. Perhaps their short attention spans and poorer sense of time or their lack of awareness of social cues made the rejections somewhat less noticeable, but these children often seemed less hurt by the meanness of other children. They tended not to bear a grudge and to be quickly *forgiving*. These traits, when they did make friends, secured a stronger friendship for them, often with a best friend.

Helping Gifted Children with ADD

Dealing with a high need for stimulation throughout life, requirements for structure, physical activity and movement, and positive reinforcement are crucial in planning educational programs. These needs are also important in parenting gifted children with ADD, and in helping them to deal with social and emotional aspects of their lives.

Educationally most of these children require both highly stimulating work at their level of achievement and compensatory techniques: use of structure in the form of point systems; ameliorating the work load for practice and rote work; giving specific instruction in writing skills including organization and elaboration of ideas; using word processors and computer programs to deal with poorer handwriting and faster thought processes than those of average students. Many of these children work better in small groups or individually so pairing them with one or two other gifted children and a mentor can be an ideal situation for acceleration and enrichment. For most of them it is important to avoid giving work that is too easy and too repetitious, which reinforces poor attention and poor work habits.

Parents need to provide structure so children master self-care skills and learn to contribute to the family. It is important not to let the child with ADD be a privileged character who does not have to do chores or behave well; yet, parents need to temper expectations with knowledge about the problems of the child. Several authors have written specifically to help parents with these tasks (Freeman, 1988; Garber, Garber & Spitzman, 1990; Taylor, 1990).

Medication is an issue that needs to be considered when either the child's symptoms are too severe or too pervasive to overcome using behavioral means alone. Symptoms are too severe if children are unable to learn and retain skills being taught or cannot generalize well from one situation to another. Therefore, a child may not look hyperactive, but may need medication to pay attention long enough to learn necessary developmental academic, social and self-regulatory skills. The same is true for a child whose deficits occur in many areas of life. Overcoming problems in so many areas using behavioral means alone may be asking the impossible of the child. Medication can help these youngsters to acquire and use skills that have been lacking.

Conclusion

This article has focused on some of the problems found in gifted children with attention deficit disorder. The issues associated with attention deficit disorder, like the issues associated with giftedness, can be lifelong. Gifted children with ADD need special planning and programming so that they can acquire skills necessary to lead productive adult lives.

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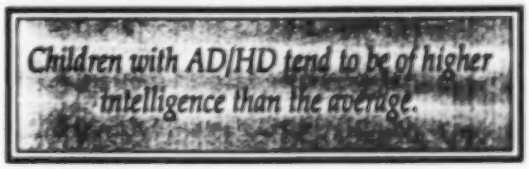
Deirdre V. Lovecky, Ph.D., is a licensed clinical psychologist in private practice in Providence, Rhode Island, and a frequent author of articles on giftedness in children and adults as well as on attention deficit.

THE PERPLEXED PERFECTIONIST Continued from page 1

sometimes has a component of varying degrees of physical hyperactivity, hence the term Attention Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD). The soon to be published fourth edition of the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV*, 1994) separates four types of AD/HD: Predominantly Inattentive Type; Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive Type; Combined Type; and Not Otherwise Specified (e.g., an adult with AD/HD who was hyperactive as a child, but not as an adult). Gifted individuals may have any of the four types of AD/HD. While the differential diagnostic decisions are outside of the scope of this article, Lovecky's article in this issue (pp. 1, 7-10) discusses AD/HD characteristics in more detail. Readers are also referred to Lind (1993) and Webb and Latimer (1993) for more information.



Although only a limited number of gifted children have attentional difficulties of any type, children with AD/HD tend to be of higher intelligence than the average. While firm research findings are not yet available, it may be that highly gifted children have a higher incidence of AD/HD-like symptoms, if not diagnosable AD/HD.

Perfectionism is first on Tannenbaum and Baldwin's (1983) list of the shared characteristics of highly motivated high IQ children vs. learning disabled children with high IQs. Among the many characteristics which individuals with AD/HD and the gifted have in common, perfectionism occurs with sufficient frequency to be worthy of consideration. Since the positive and negative sides of perfectionism apply to perfectionistic individuals whether they are children, adolescents, or adults, the ideas can be applied to gifted individuals of any age with or without AD/HD. We will, however, refer to children as the primary example.

Perfectionism's Yin and Yang

For the sake of brevity, we will not debate whether perfectionism is good or bad. Let us instead accept a Taoist perspective which emphasizes the yin and yang, the acknowledgment of both positive and negative sides to perfectionism. If we start from that point of view, we can address the more productive issue of, "When is perfectionism useful for the individual's achievement and when is it a detriment?" so that we can minimize the negative and maximize the positive aspects of perfectionism.

May the force be with you: The struggle between good and evil in "Star Wars" can be an analogy to perfectionism's dual nature. The "force" is the positive drive to create something better and the satisfaction of achieving it, while the "dark side" can be anxiety and self-recriminating frustration when that achievement is not yet attained. As concerned observers, we want to see the motivating "force" as the individual strives for higher achievements, but want him or her to avoid feeling anxiety, frustration and lessened self-esteem.

Gifted children with AD/HD often have high personal and interpersonal expectations. However, they frequently experience underachievement because there is consistent variability in their performance. They are occasionally on target and as productive as expected. At other times they are susceptible to distractions from high levels of "internal" stimuli (thoughts) as well as from kinesthetic or external visual and auditory stimuli. Then they are not able to maintain the previous level of performance.

The gifted child with AD/HD is most often well intentioned, wanting to please and motivated towards achievement, but frustrated, because performance can vary without any apparent, identifiable motivational difference. The child may develop a learned strategy of perfectionism as over-compensation to increase the likelihood of achievement. For

example, "If I demand that my homework is perfect, I have a better chance of getting it right."

Gifted children without attention deficits may have many of the same characteristics as gifted AD/HD children, but performance is more within their control. Both groups are likely to be bombarded by high internal distractibility— "overexcitabilities" (Piechowski, 1979), and to have lower frustration tolerance for tasks without novelty or intrinsic motivational value. However, non-ADD gifted children *can* choose to persist if, for instance, the motivational value is changed by a highly rewarding outcome. The gifted AD/HD child, for whom internal or external distractors prohibit maintaining attention to the task, may not be able to persist and perform. The level of impulse control is also a factor that can affect performance. However, as they reach the maturity of young adulthood, many individuals with AD/HD seem to develop greater impulse control; therefore, they are able to function more successfully.

As they reach the maturity of young adulthood, many individuals with AD/HD seem to develop greater impulse control.

The Payoff for Perfectionism

The perfectionism of gifted children with AD/HD has less chance to pay off than when the gifted child is without an attention deficit. The persistence of the AD/HD child in the face of susceptibility to distraction is less likely to lead to achievement. The notion that bright individuals can always achieve the goal if they are persistent enough is a perfectionistic fallacy. Starting with high expectations, an attempt is made, but achievement is less than expected. The resulting frustration and anxiety over performance can lead to progressive performance decrements over time.

Anxiety over performance can take many forms: fear of failure, an "I can't do it" attitude, an obsessive set of thoughts about the task, or a compulsion to repeat the task in a perseverative manner. The possibility exists that gifted AD/HD children are more susceptible to the forms of anxiety noted above than gifted children without AD/HD, but that hypothesis has not been empirically tested.

The gifted child without AD/HD has a much higher likelihood of achievement than the gifted child with AD/HD if strong motivation, equal degrees of perfectionism, and a distracting environment in which to accomplish the task are the same. More frequent payoff to gifted children without AD/HD means that their persistent perfectionism will be reinforced. Their self-esteem and belief in their ability to accomplish the goal (the positive side of perfectionism) will be strengthened. The gifted child with AD/HD, on the other hand, is more likely to experience the negative side of perfectionism. The marked contrast between high expectations and the reality of consistently inconsistent performance can leave the child's self-esteem looking like a car after a demolition derby, and may, over time, discourage the child from attempting to try to do his or her best.

The Perfectionistic Paradox

One treatment technique in psychology is called prescribing the symptom. Rather than contend with an individual's perfectionism and potentially create resistance or entrench the individual in a defensive position, the strategy is to let this person continue to be perfectionistic, but modify the conscious thoughts about what it means to be the perfect perfectionist. This will increase the likelihood of behavioral change. The perfectionistic paradox is that ***to be the best you can be, you must still accomplish this in the real world, which means acknowledging that there is a certain probability of error.*** Some variables, like the weather, are simply outside of our control. Thus, we can only **approximate** the perfect solution to a problem.

Accepting the Perfectionistic Paradox, we can come closest to achieving a perfect solution if we **plan to minimize error**. The most straightforward way to accomplish that is to approach a goal through a gradual system of successive steps leading to the goal. The probability of error decreases as we achieve each progressive step successfully. Perhaps the following metaphoric fable can illustrate the situation.

Pop's Rule

At a beach house with a deck elevated above the sand, a large extended family gathered to baste themselves with oil of sacrifice to the sun god and seek respite from stress. Stress soon found them in its chameleon-like way (as it often does) and took the form of a multitude of merry munchkins constantly crying out to be carried up and down the stairs. The scene resembled the flow from an ant colony to and from the picnic. By mid-afternoon, the adults and the older children were approaching the limits of their frustration tolerance as sherpas to sand-covered toddlers.

The beloved grandfather of the clan (affectionately known as "Pop") ceased being an observer and rose from the shaded comfort of his white wicker rocking chair to go to the tool shed. This aging Huckleberry Finn

soon had a swarm of workers wielding hammers and saws to the task of building half-steps and a low handrail along one side of the staircase. Thus, the origin of ***Pop's Rule: If they are not yet able to climb the whole staircase, help them to build half-steps so they can make it to the top on their own.***

Pop's Rule encourages the growth of independence, self-esteem, and pride in accomplishment. It conveys that ***you can do it*** without either an unrealistic expectation (too large a single step) or the impression that outside assistance is a prerequisite to accomplishment (being carried). Pop's Rule is a sequential thinker's problem-solving technique that can assist the non-sequential thinker through a cognitive cul-de-sac and generalize well to new situations.

To help a gifted child learn to operate on the basis of Pop's Rule requires starting with a child who wants to solve a problem. It is important to find a happy medium between dependence-inducing over-protection and unrealistic expectations of too much independence. Adults can assist a child without taking over ownership of the problem. Do not carry them up the stairs; help them to build half-steps so they can reach the top themselves.

In one case, Pop's Rule was taught in the course of therapy to a 13-year-old gifted boy with AD/HD who was motivated to learn new problem-solving techniques to avoid his parents' almost constant interventions. Further injury to his already wounded self-esteem was prevented by letting him define the need for his parents' assistance. When he felt he could not quite manage the next step, he would ask them to help design what had to be done; then he would politely ask them to leave so that he might build his science project himself. Many gifted individuals, particularly introverts, prefer to work in private. It enhances their sense of accomplishment to resolve the problem themselves and then show the finished product to the world. The boy was able to obtain limited consults from his parents, and yet retain his pride and the individual ownership of his creation.

The example above also demonstrates an important point.The application of Pop's Rule helped this child to create his science project with only limited consultation (as opposed to frequent intervention) from his parents. The process of learning to apply Pop's Rule was a series of half-steps down from the uncertain tight-rope of his dependence upon them to the solid ground of independent creation with minimum support. Pop's Rule can thus be used both to build steps of new learning and independence, and to step away from dependence in a gradual way.

Gifted AD/HD children who are of the Predominantly Impulsive Type are much more likely to make an impulsive first choice at problem solution. If that choice fixates in a negative perfectionistic fashion, rather than allowing for review of alternative solutions, these children are less likely to achieve the best solution; this usually leads to negative consequences, such as frustration, and lowered self-esteem. Teaching them to use Pop's Rule will help to counteract their tendency to react impulsively. If they use a stepwise strategy, they are more likely to avoid an erroneous or non-optimal solution to the problem. Helping them to generalize Pop's Rule to new situations and to apply it independently will take time, but it is a worthwhile technique in a repertoire of problem-solving approaches.

Carefully structuring the environment, including our adult behavior, allows all AD/HD and gifted children to minimize anxiety and frustration by decreasing externally imposed demands that goal achievement occur in a single step. Many AD/HD and gifted children already make those demands upon themselves. Helping them to learn Pop's Rule increases the possibility that they will experience the positive side of perfectionism more often.

To return to our example of the Taoist concept of yin and yang, of the balance between the positive and negative, the ideal would be for any individual, particularly the gifted individual with AD/HD, to accept the reality of errors as part of the balance between justifiable pride in accomplishment and occasional frustration when that accomplishment is not *yet* achieved. There will always be another step to take toward perfection. Absolute perfection may be impossible to attain. However, striving for excellence or doing one's best at the current step is a worthy, attainable goal.

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George W. Dorry, Ph.D., a licensed psychologist and Director of the Attention and Behavior Center in Denver, Colorado, specializes in the assessment and treatment of children, adolescents and adults with ADD/ADHD. He is chair of the Attention Deficit Disorder Advocacy Group (ADDAG).Board of Directors.

ADHD or Gifted?

A Dialogue with Sharon Lind, M.S. Ed. and Linda Silverman, [illegible]

LS: *I'd like to begin by apologizing, Sharon, for editorial changes I made in your article "Are We Mislabeling Overexcitable Children" [UOG, 1993, 5(5A)] without securing your approval before the issue went to press. I didn't mean to put words in your mouth that misconstrued your meaning. Through this dialogue, I hope our readers will gain clarification of your perspective on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).*

ADHD is one of the most complicated syndromes to diagnose. There are legitimate cases, and illegitimate cases, and I don't think the classroom teacher is in a position to be able to tell the difference. So I usually recommend that parents contact a clinician who has studied both ADHD and giftedness and can distinguish between the two. How do you see it?

> *More and more children who are showing characteristics of overexcitability are being identified by classroom teachers, counselors and parents as ADHD.*

SL: I don't disagree with anything you are saying. However, I believe that more and more children who are showing characteristics of over-excitability are being identified by classroom teachers, counselors and parents as ADHD. That concerns me. I definitely want us to be able to distinguish, if we can, between ADHD and giftedness because the way we treat a child with ADHD is certainly different from the way we treat a child who is overexcitable, highly gifted, or intense. I truly believe that there are overexcitable gifted children who also have ADHD and perhaps other kinds of disabilities as well. My concern is that the cause of some of the mislabeled behavior is inappropriate classroom environment. If that is the case, I would like to see the school try to solve the problem first. I think we need to take a few weeks, or a month at the most, to try to alter some of the activities that are going on at school before we refer to a clinician. If we go immediately to a professional, then the teacher, parent or child may feel disempowered—unable to handle it themselves—and that takes away their internal locus of control. Continually seeking out experts detracts from the self-efficacy of the individuals involved.

I'm not recommending that we bypass the clinician. But first we need to find out if it's new behavior. If it is new, we want to see if the school is contributing to the "misbehavior" and what can be done to change the environment. And I am also saying that we need to talk with the children. It astounds me how many interventions and decisions are made about children without their input. So what I am saying is that we should start with the school, get input from the child, and, if nothing improves in a short period of time, then, absolutely, contact a clinician.

LS: *What advice do you give to the teacher?*

SL: Try to figure out when these behaviors occur. Are they, for example, during certain activities? Some children only act out during subjects they already know. Vary the kinds of curriculum available to the child. Take into consideration the child's learning style.

I'm not saying that there aren't children who need clinicians, but I think a lot of students are being labeled ADHD in the school or by their pediatrician. I can't tell you how many times I hear the parent say that Mrs. Jones thinks little Sally is ADHD at school so they take her to Dr. Tiddlywinks and Dr. Tiddlywinks puts her on Ritalin. That scares me to death.

LS: *That happens a lot. I've heard this from pediatricians, too. My greatest concern is that medications are not being monitored properly by physicians. A specialist needs to be in charge of determining the type of medication, the proper dosage and changes in dosage needed over time. Most pediatricians are not specialists in ADHD; they need to work in conjunction with a psychologist, psychiatrist or therapist who specializes in ADD/ADHD.*

SL: The other warning we have to give to parents is that there aren't that many clinicians out there who really know about giftedness and ADHD. That means we need to give ammunition to those parents about giftedness, asynchronous development, and overexcitabilities, *before* they go to the clinician. Otherwise, the clinician might assume that those behaviors which may reflect intensity, giftedness or overexcitability indicate that the child needs Ritalin instead of an intervention that would not require medication.

LS: *Could you go over the original list of 13 questions parents and teachers should ask, pointing out any discrepancies between what was printed in the article and what you meant?*

(Continued on page 14)

SL: OK.

1. Could the behaviors be in response to inappropriate placement, insufficient challenge or lack of intellectual peers? Does the child show these behaviors at home?

That's fine. One of the things we see when it isn't ADHD is that it is only happening at school. We know with ADHD that the behaviors tend to be less at home but one of the things I'm hearing from parents of the gifted is that they don't see *any* of these behaviors at home; the children only show them at school. That's a clue to me that it's school-related.

2. Could lack of interest, boredom or irrelevancy play a part? Is the child unable to concentrate even when interested in the activity?

The question is, why aren't they able to concentrate? We know that some ADHD kids can't concentrate on certain kinds of activities, but one of the distinctions, I think, is that gifted children have stronger passions. The real ADHD gifted child may still have trouble concentrating on these, whereas we can't get highly gifted children away from their passions.

LS: *Yes, although I have seen true ADHD gifted kids who have a phenomenal attention span as long as they are in* ***total control*** *of the situation. That really throws the parents because they say, "My child could concentrate for eight hours on something." But that kind of concentration could also be perseveration, sometimes related to ADHD without hyperactivity, which is much more difficult to diagnose.*

SL: Xavier Castellanos spoke in November at the Texas Association for the Gifted Conference about the preliminary results of his research on gifted ADHD boys. He thinks that the ADHD-type behaviors we are so concerned about right now were behaviors that we cherished prior to the Industrial Revolution. These children are the explorers and the risk-takers. Ever since the Industrial Revolution, with the way our education works, and the kinds of things we need in our society, we don't value those behaviors anymore. We need to be sure that these children know their value. Maybe they are perseverating, and truly if they are perseverating that could be a serious emotional problem, but by the same token, it could be a wonderful skill to have in terms of staying with something they're really passionate about. But we usually don't do that. We say, "Now it's time for math."

> ***My concern is that the cause of some of the mislabeled behavior is inappropriate classroom environment. If that is the case, I would like to see the school try to solve the problem first.***

3. Have any curricular modifications been made in an attempt to change the inappropriate behaviors? If so, what has been the result?

That's fine.

4. Has the child been interviewed? What are his or her feelings about the behaviors?

That's an extension of my plea that we need to know what the child thinks.

5. Does the child feel out of control? Do the parents perceive the child to be out of control? (Many children with ADHD do not recognize when they are out of control.)

The distinction I want to make is the difference between the child who feels out of control and the child who is psychomotor overexcitable and loves movement, loves the activity—thinks it's fantastic—as opposed to the kids I've talked to who just hate it because they aren't in control. It's like someone else is in charge of their body.

You added, "Many children with ADHD do not recognize when they are out of control." That's probably true, but I don't want the implication to be that they don't really know what it feels like when it happens. They may not know it at the moment they are out of control, but I believe if you sit down with them they can describe, at least in some instances, how they felt in that situation.

LS: *There are types of hyperactivity where the children* ***never*** *have been in control; being wired all the time is so normal and natural for them that they have no basis of comparison. There are other kids—and these are the ones you're thinking of—that have waves of attention and inattention; they are really upset by the fact that they were thinking about something and then the thought disappeared. But in the more serious cases, the children wouldn't have a clue that they were out of control: those are the kids I was thinking about.*

SL: Absolutely. I don't question that. When we are looking at a list that someone has developed of signs of ADHD, and we see a lot of those key points in the behavior of a child, then we need to get that child to someone who can understand a gifted ADHD person—a doctor or clinician who has that knowledge. But we want to be sure we know the distinction between children who have never experienced being out of control because they are always out of control and the ones who really love activity and the ones who are in and out and feel like they're on somebody else's roller coaster.

6. Has the child been taught strategies to limit stimuli and deal with stress? Has the child been taught appropriate social skills?

Intensely overexcitable kids can be taught some strategies to deal with all of the input that they're getting. But if they don't have those strategies, their behaviors are going to be considered totally inappropriate because they can't cope with all that's going on.

LS: Who's going to do all of this teaching? The teacher?

SL: The counselor should be able to do it and the special education teacher also should be able to teach them.

LS: So you are recommending bringing the special education teacher into the picture?

SL: You have to be careful how you do that, to make sure everyone knows why they are coming in, because there may be a stigma attached to special education teachers. Sometimes physical or occupational therapists can help, too. I'm just saying there are resources available that you can use. In most schools there are teams where specialists all work together. If you are concerned about a child, you bring that child to the team. The problem is that most of those teams don't contain the gifted specialist, and that person should be there as well as the psychologist or the school counselor or the special educator and whoever else is on the team. That's where someone can say, "You know, I had a student like that in my special ed. class who had a lot of trouble with distractibility to light; let me tell you some of the things I did with that child." Qualified specialists do exist in the schools, and if you can solve the problem locally it is better for everybody's self-esteem. The other thing is that in most places it's naive to think that there is anywhere to go, so you had better try to figure out how to solve it locally.

7. Can the child explain in a reasonable fashion why tasks and activities remain unfinished?

I don't have a problem with that one.

8. What prompts the interruptions and excessive talking? Can the child control these behaviors?

The part that you added was "Can the child control these behaviors?" I'm just not comfortable with that statement. It's really important to know if they're doing it because they can't help blurting out or are they doing it because they're intellectually overexcitable?

LS: I think that is a critical piece of the picture because the child who has the ability to control the behavior is probably not a strong candidate for ADHD. Children who can't control their behavior even when they try really hard are probably clearer candidates for ADHD.

SL: That's probably true, but I think it depends on the age of the child. For older students, that may be the case, but the younger students I'm not so sure about.

LS: Yes, age definitely must be considered. At our last Visual-Spatial Learner Study Group meeting, George Dorry said that ADHD is basically ***disinhibition****—lack of impulse control. If we think about it in terms of Dabrowski's theory, it is intensity of stimulation combined with the inability to control one's behavior. George says that as these children get older, they still have the same amount of overstimulation to contend with, but they have greater impulse control. So development plays a part here. In a very young child, we wouldn't expect a great deal of impulse control, but the older the child, the more significant impulsive behavior becomes as a diagnostic factor.*

SL: I agree with you, but one of the things that I have found working with highly intellectually gifted junior high and high school kids is that sometimes they get to the point at which they're so frustrated with the educational system that they just don't try to inhibit themselves. They think, "You know, this system is so screwed up that when I get an idea, I'm just going to say it anyway." The point here is that if you go back to the idea of talking with the child, you will get a clearer picture of the cause of the misbehavior.

9. Can the "inattentive" child repeat the instructions?

It's obvious that they could be doing two other things at the same time. Also, I think there is fairly good evidence that some bright ADHD kids could also repeat the instructions. There is a common misconception that if you don't look like you're paying attention you're not getting the information. And with our bright kids, we know that they can be doing numerous things at once; so can teachers during teachers' meetings!

10. Does the child thrive on working on multiple tasks? Does he or she finish them?

You added the second sentence. I didn't care for this change. I don't see a need for tasks to be finished. The message that I want to say here is that it's OK for people to have learning styles of loving to do more than one thing at once and they will, in fact, finish them when they deem it necessary to finish them. They may never finish them. But working on multiple tasks doesn't have anything to do with whether they finish them or not.

11. Do the behaviors occur at certain times of the day, during certain subjects, with certain

teachers, in certain environments, and not in other circumstances?

That's fine. In other words, are they motivated by that situation. It may not be a pervasive problem, which would then make us assume it's not ADHD.

12. Is the child getting an appropriate amount of teacher attention? Does the child demand constant attention from the teacher? Is he or she capable of working alone?

I think that "inappropriate acting-out behaviors" sometimes occur because of not getting teacher attention. In many cases, teachers have the idea that the gifted kids can take care of themselves, so they don't tend to be asked questions, they don't answer questions and they aren't given the same amount of attention. That could be one reason for the misbehavior. That's why it's there.

You added, "Does the child demand constant attention from the teacher?" It depends on the motivation for the constant attention. It could be intellectual overexcitability. It could be that the teacher is not giving them any attention. It could be ADHD. It could be that there is a terrible problem at home.

You also added, "Is he or she capable of working alone?" If you put it within the context of the rest of this, it's fine, but you could be talking about just a dependent child as opposed to an attention deficit child, so that's confusing. It's not clear what that means.

*LS: They're all related to each other. So the second part of the question would be, **"Do you as the teacher feel that it's constant attention-getting behavior? Is the frequency of the behavior much more than you would get from other bright kids.?"** And then, **"Is the child only able to work when he or she is getting your attention?"*** That wording would have been clearer.

13. SL: OK. Then the one that was left out was, **"Is the child just demonstrating his or her personality, type of giftedness or intensity?"** which is sort of a conclusionary question.

LS: It wasn't a question that could be answered in the same way as the others. How would the teacher know? All of the questions can be answered by observation except that one. So the other questions represent an observation scale for teachers. If you modify any of those areas, you can see if it makes a difference.

I am as convinced as you are that many of the problems originate in the classroom. What confuses me about your position is that if the problem stems from the classroom, what makes you think that the classroom teacher can solve it?

SL: I don't think the classroom teacher can solve it alone, but I believe that most educational systems can and I think we need to give them a chance to try. What happens is that we are asking the classroom teacher to solve the problem on her own. She has a lot of resources she can rely on: the parents, the child, the counselor, other specialists in the school. We need to give them a chance to try that first. For most classroom teachers, the idea that part of the behavior is related to giftedness is new information, so sometimes merely learning about giftedness makes them rethink what they're doing. It's more threatening for the teacher to have a medical or clinical professional advise them than for a parent or fellow educator to say, "Perhaps you would like to read this article about overexcitabilities," or "Perhaps we could work this out as a team." The more often we're able to do that, the more likely we are to get the teacher involved and the more likely that teacher will be to help the next gifted child who looks like he or she has ADHD.

WHY ARE YOU HERE, GUNTHER?
I, UM... I WANT TO DISCUSS MY PROBLEMS, MISS PHELPS
MISS PHELPS SCHOOL COUNSELLOR
I AM IN
PROBLEMS? GUNTHER, YOU'RE AN OUTSTANDING STUDENT. YOU GET PERFECT SCORES, YOU NEVER CAUSE TROUBLE, YOU'RE ALWAYS PUNCTUAL, NEAT AND ORGANIZED, AND YOU'RE EXTREMELY WELL-MANNERED AND RESPONSIBLE
WHAT 'PROBLEMS' DO YOU WANT TO DISCUSS?
ALL OF THOSE

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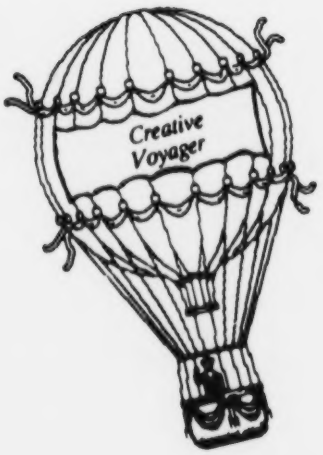

Creative Ventures And Encounters

Jerry Flack

Tour Guide

See the U.S.A. in a Brand New Way

Summer is a time for family trips and travel and on this creative journey we will meet one of the most imaginative persons working in art today, Japan's Mitsumasa Anno. *Anno's USA* is a wonderful picture book as well as a genuine, red-white-and-blue, Fourth-of-July tribute to this great land by a man who has long appreciated its history, art, literature, music, and popular culture. In Anno's art, we see America through the eyes of a visitor who savors its immense geography, the grandeur and splendor of its natural landmarks, its robust people, and its rich, multicultural traditions.

Anno's USA is a wordless picture book, but it would be a great error to believe it is only for young children. The beauty of the book is that it can be enjoyed at many levels of sophistication. Anno's delicate watercolors will no doubt charm prereaders, but the book also serves as a genuine challenge to well-educated adults. Readers need a background in American history, literature, and folklore to truly appreciate the breadth of the artist's celebration of the American land and its people. Preparatory to his personal journey across the United States, Anno intensely studied American literature, history, geography, music, art, folklore, and culture; in the pages of *Anno's USA* he reveals more about our country than most Americans know. Readers of Anno's visual feast will witness the making of classic American movies in Monument Valley; visit the Alamo and the Taos Pueblo; spy Tom Sawyer suckering his friends into whitewashing a fence; note James Whistler's Mother sitting for a portrait; join a Preservation Hall jazz concert in progress; be present for the signing of the Declaration of Independence at Philadelphia; observe the selling of Manhattan Island; and, attend Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Travelers of these pages can also scout raucous scenes from Leonard Bernstein's "West Side Story" and the Boston Tea Party, plus a tender moment from Robert McCloskey's *Make Way for Ducklings*.

Whether your family travel this summer is by car, plane, train or is confined to the imagination while sitting in the living room on a lazy summer Sunday afternoon, here are some creative ways to enjoy *Anno's USA*. The questions and prompts begin easily for the youngest readers and become increasingly more difficult.

The traveler making the journey across America begins in a boat and shortly changes to ride a horse. Can you find him on every doublepage in the book?

How many different kinds of transportation can you find in each doublepage scene?

Find a game or a fun activity in each scene. How many different games can you see being played throughout the book?

Find an animal in each doublepage scene. Lots of animals have escaped from the Central Park Zoo and are hiding in one scene. Can you find a zebra, a bear, a rabbit, and a squirrel? How many animals can be found?

Find a scene that reveals a landmark or setting you have visited.

Find the scene that is geographically nearest to you.

(Continued on page 18)

SEE THE U.S.A. continued from page 17

What states are first visited by Anno on his journey? (Hawaii and Alaska)

How many cities can you find and name? (San Francisco is the first large city he visits.)

Can you find a Halloween pumpkin? Santa Claus?

Can you spy a wedding in progress? How about a bank robbery? A quilting bee?

See how many of these famous characters you can locate?

Little Orphan Annie and Daddy Warbucks
Lucy, Charlie Brown, and Snoopy
Paul Bunyan
The creatures from ***Where the Wild Things Are***
Superman

Find the recreation of Grant Wood's ***American Gothic.*** *Find Mark Twain as a riverboat pilot. Locate Betsy* Ross. *Where do you see Davy Crockett? Detect the gunfight at the O.K. Corral. Find the visual allusion to Hemingway's* ***The Old Man and the Sea****, an artist's portrait of Albert Einstein, and a famous painting by Andrew Wyeth.*

Anno's USA is a very versatile book that parents will have as much fun with as their children. It represents a most creative way to share with our children the richness of their country, and it is a painless way for parents to take a refresher course in American history and humanities.

REFERENCE

Anno, M. (1983). *Anno's USA*. New York: Philomel.

Jerry Flack, Ph.D., is a President's Teaching Scholar and Professor of Gifted Education at the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs, and the author of several books, including ***Inventing, Inventions, and Inventors*** and ***Lives of Promise.***

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ANTENNA . . . .

Current Developments in Gifted Education

T*urnabout children* is the term Mary MacCracken (1986) gives to kids with learning disabilities. In her book of that name, she says, *"The label is the least important part... It is the child himself who matters"* (p. 20). She goes on to say that these children have more protective devices than most, and..."*if they weren't intelligent, they wouldn't worry about it because they wouldn't be so painfully aware*" (p. 20). She discusses the ..."*silent cry for help from these children who, given the opportunity, will startle you with their insights, sensitivity, intelligence, humor, and ingenuity*" (p. 21).

MacCracken's comments apply to many children who must be labeled in order to get the special services they deserve. While she doesn't specifically mention gifted students, her description of turnabout children and intelligence would certainly seem to include them.

Calls and letters from parents have changed over the years from an underlying tone of both frustration and humility to an ever-increasing sense of urgency and indignation, as well as anger at the injustice of a system that labels children inappropriately or services them inadequately. More and more frequently, parents describe their gifted youngsters who have learning disabilities and ask why there are so few resources for them. They say that their children are at risk because they are either treated like special education students who are not gifted, or gifted children who have no disabilities.

Fortunately, current literature in the field of gifted education (including *Understanding Our Gifted*) is addressing the critical topic of double labeled children. Also federal funds, through the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Program, have been made available for research projects which include gifted/learning-disabled students. However, optimism is dimmed by possible obstacles:

• School districts may not be able to be reimbursed twice for the same student. • Some students are not achieving below grade level because *their gift masks the disability and their disability masks the gift* (Baum, 1994, p.11) and, because they don't flag our attention, they are difficult to find. • Some gifted/learning-disabled high school students who are unable to pass state exams in areas of their disability are denied regular diplomas, even though they may be superior in all other areas.

According to Baum (1994), ...*The most important goal we can have for the field is to find an advocate to represent each and every gifted/learning-disabled student to assure that they receive what they need to address their disabilities as well as the guidance they deserve to nurture their special gifts and talents.* (p.15) Wouldn't it be wonderful if our twice exceptional students could receive the consistent support to emerge from their journey through the school maze as turned about children?

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Baum, S.M.(1994). Meeting the needs of gifted/learning disabled students. *Journal of Secondary Gifted Education, 5*(3), 6-16.

MacCracken, M. (1986). *Turnabout children. New York: Signet.*

Dorothy Knopper, M.A., is a private consultant for gifted education in Colorado, author of ***Parent Education: Parents as Partners***, and publisher of ***Understanding Our Gifted.***

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